

Claims:

1. Use of an agent having the property of disrupting the binding of p53 and mdm2 or inhibiting the production of mdm2 in a population of cells, in the preparation of a medicament for activating p53, wherein the population of cells do not overexpress mdm2.

2. The ^{method}~~use~~ of claim 1 wherein the p53 is activated for DNA specific binding and transcription.

3. The ^{method}~~use~~ of claim 1 ~~or claim 2~~ wherein the agent comprises a peptide having an amino acid sequence corresponding to human p53 which has the property of binding to mdm2.

4. The ^{method}~~use~~ of claim 3 wherein the peptide is less than 25 amino acids in length and has an amino acid sequence having at least 70% amino acid sequence identity with a corresponding portion of human p53.

5. The ^{method}~~use~~ of claim 3 ~~or claim 4~~ wherein the agent includes the peptide motif FxxxW, where x is any amino acid.

6. The ^{method}~~use~~ of claim 1 ~~or claim 2~~ wherein the agent has the property of binding to one or more regions of mdm2 involved in binding to p53.

7. The ^{Method}~~use~~ of claim 6 wherein the agent is an antibody which is capable of blocking a p53 binding site of mdm2.

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a 8. The ~~use~~ ^{method} of claim 1 ~~or claim 2~~ wherein the agent has the property of competing with mdm2 for binding p53, but does not inhibit a biological activity of p53.

a 5 9. The ~~use~~ ^{method} of claim 8 wherein the agent is an antibody capable of blocking a mdm2 binding site of p53.

a 10 10. The ~~use~~ ^{method} of claim 1 ~~or claim 2~~ wherein the agent is an antisense oligonucleotide capable of inhibiting the synthesis of mdm2 in the population of cells.

a 15 11. The ~~use of any one of the preceding claims~~ ^{method of Claim 1} wherein the medicament is for the treatment of cancer, a viral condition or other condition associated with non functional p53 or mdm2.

20 12. A method of activating p53 comprising exposing a population of cells to an agent having the property of disrupting the binding of p53 and mdm2 or inhibiting the production of mdm2 so that p53 in the cells is activated, wherein the cells do not overexpress mdm2.

25 13. The method of claim 12 wherein the p53 is activated for DNA specific binding and transcription.

a 30 14. The method of claim 12 ~~or claim 13~~ wherein the agent comprises a peptide having an amino acid sequence corresponding to human p53 which has the property of binding to mdm2.

a 15. The method of claim 12 ~~or claim 13~~ wherein the

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Sub
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06974-1

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a

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W25

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27. The method of claim 22 wherein the test substances are coupled to transport molecules so that test substances are transported into the cells.